of wheat or rice over and above their normal monthly allocation, it will be allotted at Economic Cost.

In case of sugar, monthly quota has been revised from March, 2000 and allocations are being made on the basis of projected population as on 1-3-1999 which works out to 13592 MT for Kerala.

Allocations of kerosene is made on historical basis i.e., past years supplies plus additional allocation out of increase given at national level. Possible increase is given, out of additional availability at country level, in accordance with a formula, under which higher allocation out of additional quantity is given to States with lower per capita availability, so as to reduce inter-state disparity over a period of time.

Assisting States Facing Shortage of Foodgrains

4282. SHRI A. VIJAYA RAGHAVAN : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) the States facing shortage of foodgrains throughout the country;

(b) the steps taken by the Central Government to assist State; and

(c) Whether the Central Government would give special assistance to Kerala to continue the existing PDS system in that State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHRIRAM CHAUHAN) : (a) and (b), Supply of foodgrains through Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) is only supplemental to the open market availability in the country. No reports have been received about States/UTs facing shortage of food grains for TPDS. There is no shortage of food grains in the central pool for TPDS requirement throughout the country. The stock of wheat and rice as on 1-4-2000 in the central pool was 131 lakh tonnes and 149 lakh tonnes respectively which is in excess to the tune of 91 lakh tonnes in case of wheat and 31 lakh tonnes in case of rice against the prescribed buffer stock level for that date. The allocations of rice and wheat are made to the states/UTs for TPDS regularly.

(c) No, Sir. However, Kerala being a food deficit State, large allocation of food grains have been made in the past and the same is still maintained. The

fact that supplies need to be ensured to meet the requirement of States deficit in food production like Kerala is kept in mind while making any decision regarding allocation of food grains.

Demand/availability of Pulses

† 4283. Dr. D.MASTHAN:

SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH :

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that availability of pulses in the country is low in comparison to the demand;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the prices of pulses are also high due to excessive demand;

(c) if so, whether import facility has been provided into the country to keep the balance of demand and supply and to bring down the prices of pulses; and

(d) if so, the reasons for allowing the export of pulses from the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI V. SREENIVASA PRASAD): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The gap between demand and supply of pulses exerts pressure on their prices.

(c) Import of pulses is allowed under OGL at zero import duty. The Government had also imported about one lakh tonnes of pulses during 1999-2000 to supplement the domestic availability of pulses in order to keep their prices at reasonable level.

(d) Export of pulses are allowed only in consumer packs of up to 5 kg and are consumed by the ethnic Indian population living abroad. The export of pulses forms only a small fraction of the total production of pulses in the country.

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† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.